Section IV

Facility Program Analysis

Before potential transit center sites can be evaluated, it is beneficial to develop a conceptual list of desirable program elements, as the basis for sizing the potential facility site. This section first develops a list of program elements. Next, general dimensions of a site are defined for two scenarios: an off-street center (providing bus circulation off of the street), and an on-street center where bus bays are provided along a public street or streets.

Before detailing the program, it is worthwhile to review the general function of the transit center. As a whole, a transit system (such as GCS) has three functions requiring facilities: a facility for passengers, a facility for transit bus maintenance and storage, and a facility for administration and operations. The requirements of the passenger facility and maintenance/storage facility differ substantially: the former is best located in an area of high activity (and thus land costs), while the latter requires a large parcel, and is a light industrial use better sited in an area of similar land uses with lower land costs. In addition, smaller transit systems typically find the administration/operations functions are best co-housed with the bus maintenance/storage functions, as this provides the best oversight of day-to-day operations. In addition, as indicated below, the land availability in the downtown Grass Valley area is very limited, and the additional land costs associated with co-housing the administrative/operations functions with the passenger center would be very substantial. Accordingly, the downtown Grass Valley area is not appropriate for a GCS facility incorporating the administrative/operations or the bus maintenance/storage functions. The remainder of this study therefore focuses on passenger center functions only.

Existing and Future Transit Center Program Elements

Table 4 presents a summary of those uses found to be potentially appropriate, along with general space requirements associated with each.

Building Program

A "core" use of the facility will be to serve as the primary public transit passenger facility for the community. In this capacity, the following elements can be considered:

- Passenger waiting areas are needed for those passengers not directly transferring from one bus to another. At present, a maximum of approximately 15 passengers have been observed to be waiting at Church and Neal at any one time (not simply walking from one bus to another). To address growth in the transit system over time as well as peak events, designing for up to 25 waiting passengers is appropriate. Of these waiting passengers, seating should be provided for half. Typical floor area required for waiting passengers are 13 square feet for every seated passenger, and

TABLE 4: Preliminary Transit Center Program Elements
Grass Valley Transit Center

7-May-07

	Units		Square Ft. Per Unit		Square Feet of Floor Area	
Transit Building Program						
Transit Passenger Uses						
Passenger Waiting Area /Circulation	1	Ea	300		300	
Drinking Fountain						
Pay Phone						
Trash and recycling bins						
Restrooms	2	Ea	250		500	
Transit Information Counter	1	Ea	160		160	
Driver Break/Operations Room	1	Ea	200		200	
Building Support Uses						
Janitor Closet	1	Ea	60		60	
Mechanical/Service Space	1	Ea	100		100	
Total Building Program					**1,320**	
Site Development Program						
Bus Parking and Circulation						
Gold Country Stage Local Routes	7	Bays	1000	(1)	7,000	
Intercity Route	1	Bays	1200	(1)	1,200	
Total	*8*	Bays			*8,200*	
Auto Parking						
Transit Operations	2	Spaces	162		330	
Platform/Pedestrian/Bicycle Space						
Outside Pedestrian Seating Areas	1	Ea	300		300	
Bicycle Parking	8	Spaces	20		160	
Pedestrian Circulation (10' walkway adjacent to all bays)					950	
Total Site Excluding Building					**11,390**	
Total Site Including Building					**12,710**	SF
				or	**0.29**	Acres

Note 1: Assuming sawtooth bus bay configuration

7.5 square feet for every standing passenger. Applying these factors, and including space for a drinking fountain, pay phone, and trash bins, 300 square feet is required of indoor space.

- Due to the costs that would be incurred and the limits on available operating funding, full-time staffing of the Transit Center by GCS personnel is not expected. However, counter space should be provided that can be used by GCS staff for short periods, such as sales of monthly passes over one or a few specific days. A total of 160 square feet (roughly 16 feet by 10 feet) should be provided for this purpose.

- Two restrooms should be provided. At a minimum, these can be typically locked and used by transit drivers. When the facility is staffed, the restrooms can be unlocked.

- A driver break room would optimally be provided to allow drivers an opportunity for undisturbed layover time. This space can also be used for operational storage.

- A janitorial closet is needed to house maintenance supplies.

- Space is required for heating, water heater, and other utilities.

As shown in Table 4, these uses total 1,320 square feet in floor area. Note that no commercial uses (such as a snack shop or coffee shop) are recommended as part of the program. Experience at transit centers for other programs of similar size indicates that commercial uses would not be viable. Also, there are existing opportunities for snacks in the downtown Grass Valley area. In addition, vending machines are not recommended, in order to avoid the increased maintenance and cleaning requirements that they generate.

Other Site Program Requirements

Beyond the building, the Transit Center site should provide the following:

- **Bus Bays** – As discussed in Section III, current GCS schedules result in up to 5 buses at one time at the existing transit center. A key question is how this figure can be expected to grow over the 20 years (or longer) that would be the expected useful life of a new transit passenger facility. The need for additional bus capacity can come from the following:

    - *Growth in Gold Country Stage Service* – As the population of the area and the need for transit services grows, much of the growth in the transit capacity will take the form of higher service frequency on existing routes. While additional frequency increases the overall bus activity at the transit center, it does not increase the number of buses onsite at any one time. Rather, it is the establishment of new transit routes that increases the need to accommodate buses at the transit center. The establishment of new routes is in response to

development of new areas within the greater Grass Valley area. Considering the geographic constraints to new development and the rate of development, it is estimated that no more than 2 additional routes serving the Grass Valley Transit Center will be added in the future 20 years. This will add up to 2 additional buses at one time.

- The GCS fleet currently consists largely of 25-foot-long vehicles, with the exception of two 30-foot buses. It is reasonable to expect that growth in transit ridership will result ultimately result in all routes being operated by 30-foot vehicles. However, the narrow streets on which most of the routes operate preclude the use of buses larger than 30 feet. This program therefore assumes 30-foot vehicles for GCS local services.

- *Intercity Public Transit Service* – At present, intercity public transit service to/from Grass Valley is limited to GCS Route 5/5X service providing a connection to Auburn and Route 12 service to Colfax. New intercity services may well be warranted over the coming 20 years, in addition to continuing Routes 5 and 12, as population of the area increases and as fuel prices escalate. This would require 1 additional bus bay, for a 40-foot-long over-the-road coach. This bay could also potentially be used on an incidental basis for a tour bus.

In total, the transit center should be planned to accommodate future transit services that would result in a maximum of seven 30-foot buses plus one 40-foot bus at one time, or a total of 8 buses. The space requirements for these bays depend on their configuration:

- Optimally, each bus would be provided with a "sawtooth bay" that allows all buses to enter and exit the site regardless of the presence of buses in other bays, thereby reducing delays. This also allows specific bays to be designated for specific routes, which is a convenience to passengers. Sawtooth bays require 1,000 square feet each for 30-foot buses, and 1,200 square feet for 40-foot buses.

- Alternatively, buses could pull up along a straight curb. This precludes one bus from departing if there is another bus in the bay in front, or entering a bus bay if there is a bus in the bay just behind. Under this layout, designated bus bays are not feasible, as drivers need to pull up as far as possible along the curb when entering the transit center. Leaving 5 feet between vehicles, each bay requires 420 square feet for 30-foot buses or 540 square feet for 40-foot buses. Assuming the sawtooth configuration, the bus bays will require a minimum of 8,200 square feet of land area.

- Outdoor passenger plaza space should also be provided for the many pleasant days in Grass Valley when waiting outside is attractive. This area should at minimum be equal to the indoor waiting area, or 300 square feet.

- Auto parking for two GCS supervisor vehicles would be desirable. These spaces could be used for driver relief runs, for staffing the transit center information booth, or for a mechanic making "running repairs." They could also be used on an incidental basis by a Telecare van.

- Bicycle parking should be provided, for roughly 6 to 8 bikes. If the site is located adjacent to the planned Wolf Creek Parkway Alignment trail, it may also be desirable to make the transit center a trailhead for the trail. This would include informational signage, and could also include an air pump built into the side of the transit building.

These site program requirements total a minimum of 11,390 square feet of land area (assuming sawtooth bays). With the building, a minimum of 12,710 square feet is required, equal to 0.29 acres (again, assuming sawtooth bays).

Note that these figures do not include any land for vehicle circulation. These figures therefore are applicable to an "on-street" configuration for the transit center, whereby all bus bays are provided along existing public street curbs. An off-street configuration (in which buses pull into the parcel) requires substantially more land in order to accommodate the vehicle driveways, particularly if it is necessary for buses to turn around on site.

Before evaluating specific sites, it is also worthwhile to identify the length of street curb needed to accommodate the desired eight transit bays, under the on-street configuration. With the sawtooth bay option, a minimum of 410 linear feet of street frontage would be required, while the non-sawtooth option would require 290 feet of frontage.

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Section V

Site Analysis

A total of eight sites have been evaluated for the location of the potential transit center in Grass Valley. The sites considered for this study, including the existing transfer point, were selected based upon criteria addressing location preferences and amenities. The criteria included:

- Walking distance to transit generators of the downtown Grass Valley area. As the Transit Center will be the single most accessible point on the GCS transit system, it is important that it be convenient to as many destinations as possible. While passengers could potentially transfer to another route to reach destinations in downtown from a remote location, the need to transfer reduces the overall convenience of using public transit.

- The ability to accommodate changes in route running times without excessive impacts on on-time transit route performance, or the need for wholesale re-configuration of the GCS route network

- The opportunity to provide adequate space for the desired transit program, as detailed in Section IV

- The ability to enter and exit the site without undue delay due to traffic congestion or traffic queues

- A desire to minimize impacts on the Historic District

The following sections discuss the opportunities and constraints of the eight potential transit center locations. The existing transfer site as well as the potential other seven sites are presented in Figure 4. Table 5 presents a summary of the characteristics of the various sites. In addition, Table 6 presents a comparison of the sites based upon the locational factors discussed above.

Existing Site Opportunities and Constraints

An important early step in a design process is to assess the opportunities provided by a site, as well as the constraints that should be considered in site development. The discussion below presents the opportunities and constraints of using the existing site for a transit transfer point for the Gold Country Stage routes, as well as a drop off point for the Telecare system. Under the City's new Development Code, the existing site is designated as Town Core (TC), which allows for parking facilities.

FIGURE 4

POTENTIAL TRANSIT CENTER LOCATIONS

TABLE 5: Attributes of Potential Sites

Location	Existing Land Use	Zoning Designation	General Plan Designation	Historic Designation	Proximity to Downtown
Existing Site	Public Parking	Public (P)	Public	None	Within downtown
Pioneer Village Site	Private Parking and Commercial (retail)	Town Core (TC)	Commercial	None	Within downtown
Safeway Site	Commercial and Public Parking	Town Core (TC)	Commercial	None	Within downtown
Park-and-Ride Site	Public Parking			None	Less than 0.25 miles
Tinloy Site	Caltrans Right of Way			None	Less than 0.25 miles
City Hall Parking Lot Site	Public Parking	Public (P)	Public	None	Within downtown
Hansen Site	Caltrans Right of way			None	Less than 0.25 miles
Donely Motors Site	Used car sales	Neighborhood Center Flex (NC-Flex)	Commercial	None	0.40 miles

Source: LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.

Table 6: Grass Valley Transit Facility Site Analysis

Factor	Site							
	Existing Site	Pioneer Village Site	Safeway Site	Park-and-Ride Site	Tinloy Site	Hansen Site	City Hall Parking Lot	Donely Motors Site
Passenger Walking Distance to Transit Generators	Excellent	Excellent	Good	Good	Good	Fair	Excellent	Poor
Accessibility to persons with disabilities	Fair	Good	Good	Good	Excellent	Good	Excellent	Fair
Impact on Transit Route Length and Running Time	Poor	Fair	Poor	Fair	Good	Good	Good	Good
Impact of Traffic Queues on Transit Operations	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	Good	Good	Good	Good
Impact of Transit Movements on Traffic Congestion	Poor	Fair	Fair	Fair	Good	Good	Fair	Good
Relative Level of Passenger Amenity	Good	Good	Good	Poor	Good	Good	Good	Excellent
Ability of Site to Accommodate Transit Needs While Minimizing Transit Operating Delays	Fair	Fair	Poor	Good	Good	Good	Poor	Excellent
Impact on Downtown Parking	Poor	Good	Good	Good	Excellent	Excellent	Poor	Excellent
Compatability with Adjacent Land Uses	Good	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Fair	Excellent	Fair
Consistency with Adopted Plans	Excellent	Good	Good	Excellent	Poor	Good	Excellent	Excellent
Provides Attractive Environment for Passengers	Fair	Good	Fair	Fair	Excellent	Good	Excellent	Good
Land Acquisition Availability	Excellent	Excellent	Fair	Good	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Fair
Relative Cost	Excellent	Fair	Poor	Fair	Fair	Excellent	Good	Fair
Overall Score *Excellent = 4* *Good = 3* *Fair = 2* *Poor = 1*	33	34	30	34	41	37	40	37

Source: LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.

CONSTRAINTS OF EXISTING SITE

Many of the constraints present at the existing site are associated with the impact of the transit buses on traffic. The space allowed for the buses presents issues with passing traffic and overall congestion at the intersection and along the roadways. This section discusses in detail the constraints of the existing site.

While buses are waiting at the curb along Church Street in front of the transit stop, there is an insufficient amount of space at that corner for passing vehicles to clear the buses without traveling in the oncoming lane. This was observed on April 10, 2007 when 5 buses arrived at the same time and waited along the curb.

Depending on the number of buses and their location along the curb, there are problems with cars making left hand turns from eastbound Neal Street onto northbound Church Street when buses are stopped at the corner. During the site visit, approximately 3 buses were parked along the curb of Church Street, with the last bus located at the corner of Church Street and Neal Street. An additional bus was attempting to make the left turn from Neal Street onto Church Street to approach the transit stop; however, due to the location of the last parked bus and a car that was stopped at the stop sign in the southbound direction of Church Street, the bus could not make the turn until the stopped car reversed to allow room.

The existing transit stop does not provide adequate conditions for the loading and unloading of disabled (wheelchair-bound) passengers. The guidelines for the Americans with Disabilities Act requires a clear area 5 feet in width and 8 feet in depth (perpendicular to the curb) for wheelchair loading/unloading at a transit stop. The width of the existing sidewalk along the transit stop does not allow for adequate space to operate the wheelchair lifting device, requiring the buses to reposition approximately three feet from the edge of curb. This forces the buses to block nearly the entire travel lane, resulting in insufficient space for passing vehicles to continue traveling in the northbound direction of Church Street without going into the opposite lane. It also results in a gap between the bus and curb that can limit the driver's ability to assist a wheelchair user.

During peak PM traffic periods, Neal Street, Church Street and West Main Street experience significant levels of traffic congestion. These three streets comprise the main route in and out of the transit center and downtown for many of the buses, including those with high ridership, such as Route 1 and Route 4. At these peak times, queues along Church Street extend to the corner of Neal Street and beyond, mainly due to the traffic congestion along West Main Street, as previously discussed in the "Existing Traffic Conditions" portion of this report. In turn, this creates significant delays in the running times of many routes.

The area available along Church Street in the northbound direction for the GCS buses is approximately 115 feet. This is based upon the clear area along the curb, not

including the crosswalk and the driveway into the parking lot, both of which should be kept clear. The average bus length used by GCS is between 25 and 29 feet. This space along the curb cannot accommodate more than 4 buses at one time without blocking the crosswalk, blocking the parking lot driveway, or encroaching into the available street parking spaces (provided no cars are parked). Due to this constraint, buses that are approaching the transit stop when there is insufficient room for them to park must wait on nearby streets, such as School Street, until a parked bus leaves. This presents problems for riders who may be attempting to transfer onto another route within a short period of time, as well as create potential traffic problems. In addition, the need for buses to be parked with little room between them often requires that one bus wait for the bus in front to leave prior to departing the transit center. Delays in loading one bus can therefore often delay several other buses.

Other shortcomings of the site are as follows:

- Currently, there is only 1 bus shelter provided at the transfer facility, which is not large enough to serve the number of riders waiting at any given time.

- The existing bus shelter does not have lighting over the area; the only light is from a street light at the corner of Church Street and Neal Street adjacent to the shelter area.

- There are no bicycle racks at the existing transfer facility.

- Because the existing transfer facility is comprised of a single bus shelter, there are no driver or public facilities available, such as restrooms.

- The downtown frequently has afternoon, evening and weekend activities that require street closures. Subsequently, bus routes must be re-routed and the transfer facility must be temporarily relocated.

In summary, the existing Transit Center does not well serve the transit riders, results in operational problems for the transit system, and generates substantial congestion to other traffic. It also presents a poor public image of the Gold Country Stage system to the community.

OPPORTUNITIES OF EXISTING SITE

The downtown of Grass Valley is the center of the City, providing many activities and services for residents. The existing site is centrally located just outside of the historic downtown corridor (Main Street and Mill Street), and within a quarter-mile of many other essential services, including grocery stores, shops and social services. These include the City Library, movie theater, Safeway, Sierra Nevada Children's Services, senior housing and services, and local public schools. With a parking lot directly adjacent to the transfer point, parking is available for riders or visitors who drive to the site.

Discussions of maintaining the existing location have occurred, including the concept of expanding the transfer center into the adjacent parking lot to allow buses enough room off of the road. This site was previously considered as a potential location for a parking structure; but after further review by the City, it was determined that this was not a preferred site for such a use. However, should the transit center occupy a minimal section of the existing parking, such as the first row of stalls, any future parking structure elsewhere in the downtown may accommodate for the lost spaces. Any necessary route reconfigurations or time changes would be limited to 4 routes with this option, thereby making this the primary advantage for expanding on the existing site. Route 2 currently arrives at the transfer point and continues on as Route 11, and Route 6 continues on as Route 8 upon arriving at the transit center. Based on the configurations of the routes and the directions at which they arrive at the transfer point, minor revisions to the routes would be necessary but would only result in an overall route increase of 2 minutes (see Table 7). Please refer to the Appendix for the potential route configurations associated with this potential site.

The existing transfer point is located in an area surrounded by the Town Core (TC) zoning district and Commercial land use designation, which allow for higher intensity uses, promote alternative modes of transportation and better access (pedestrian and bicycle) to the downtown. The specific site, a City owned public parking lot, is zoned Public (P). A transit facility either incorporated into a parking structure or on its own would be consistent with the requirements set forth in the above districts and would be compatible with the land use designation. Further, because the parking lot is owned by the City, there would be no issues associated with acquisition of the site.

POTENTIAL SITE PLAN

Figure 5 provides a preliminary sketch of a transit center on this site that could accommodate the program for the facility. As shown, the 8 bus bays (including one 40-foot bus) would be provided along the east side of Church Street, from Neal Street north to roughly 120 feet south of West Main Street. Note that these bays are shown as the minimum dimensions, which would preclude buses from operating independently of the presence of buses in adjacent spots, and would also preclude signing designated bays for each route. The existing public parking lot would be reconfigured to reduce the number of driveways onto Church Street from two to one, and to provide space for the 1,320 square foot transit center building. The sidewalk along Church Street would be widened to a minimum of ten feet to accommodate passenger waiting areas and wheelchair deployment. Reconfiguring the parking lot would reduce the number of spaces from the current count of approximately 79 to 49. In addition, roughly 8 on-street spaces would be eliminated along Church Street, for a total loss of parking of approximately 38 spaces.

ALTERNATE POTENTIAL SITES

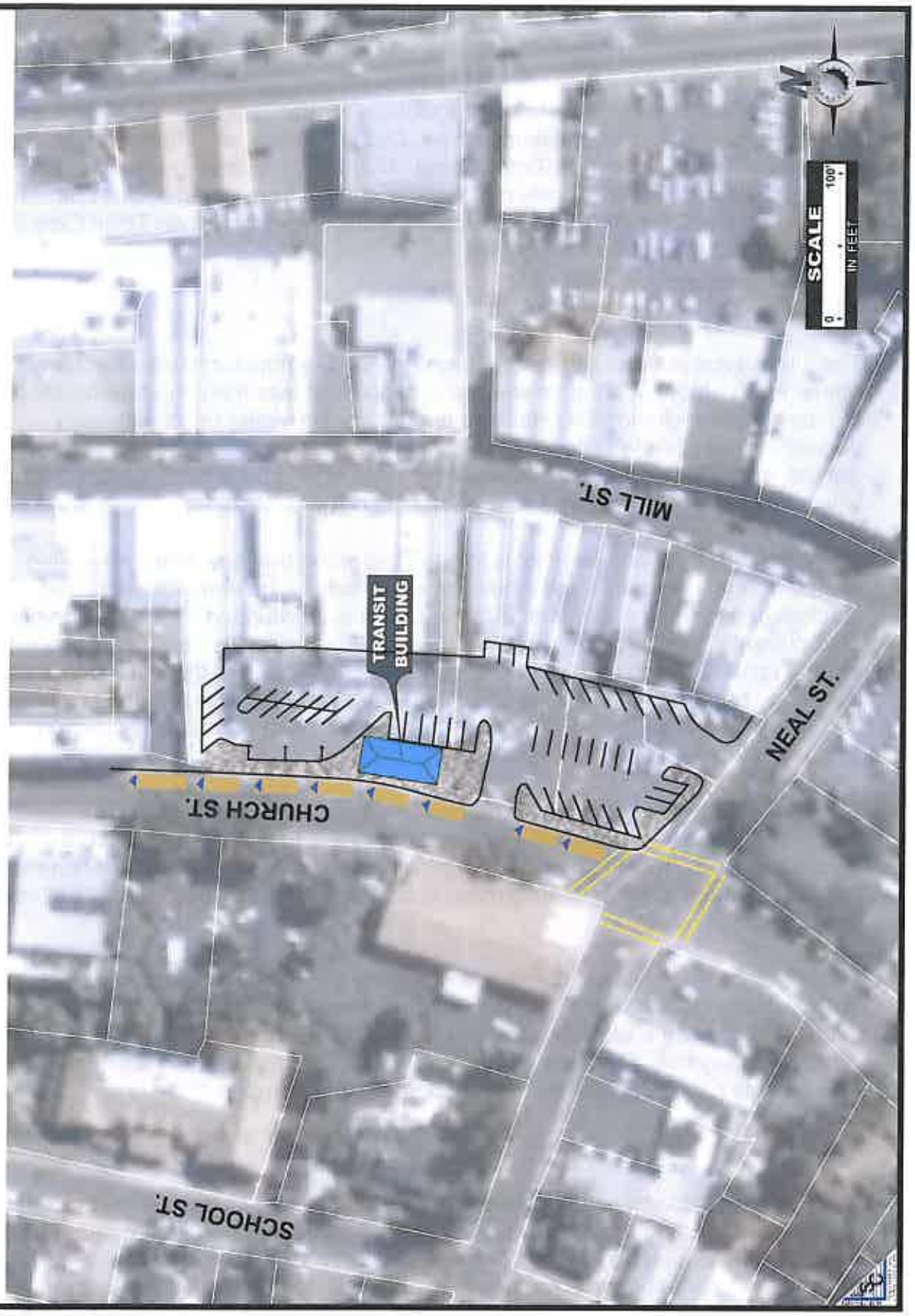
The following are descriptions of the seven additional location options for the transit center, with both constraints and opportunities discussed for each.

TABLE 7: Impact of Site Alternatives on Route Time Revisions

Route	Tinloy St	Hansen St	City Hall	Existing	Pioneer Village	Safeway	Park and Ride	Donely Motors
1	-4	-6	-4	0	-4	+1	-3	0
2/11	+8	+6	+3	+2	+4	+5	+6	+8
3	+2	+2	-2	0	0	0	+1	0
4	-3	-6	-4	0	-4	+1	-3	0
5/5x	-6	-4	-6	0	-3	-3	-6	-5
6/8	+5	+2	+2	+2	0	+4	+2	+8
10/12	-6	-6	-4	0	0	-3	-7	0

FIGURE 5

CONCEPTUAL TRANSIT CENTER SITE PLAN - EXISTING CHURCH AND NEAL SITE



Park-and-Ride Lot

The Park-and-Ride lot is located under the Golden Center Freeway (SR 49/20), and is bound by South Auburn Street, Hansen Way, Colfax Avenue, and Tinloy Street. Access is provided off Hansen Way and Tinloy Street, which doubles as a one-way approach onto the highway above. The site is not easily accessed from South Auburn Street or Colfax Avenue (eastbound). Surrounding zoning designations include Town Core (TC) and NC-Flex (Neighborhood Center Flex).

Opportunities

- The site is located across the street from Safeway, a popular destination for many riders. Furthermore, it is within walking distance and less than one-fourth mile from the downtown, including City Hall and the Library, providing riders with easy pedestrian and bicycle access. The location is also adjacent to the Hennessey School, and is within a block of the services and retail shops along Colfax Avenue, which has been identified as a redevelopment opportunity.

- Given that the Park-and-Ride lot is located under the freeway, there is existing shelter from the elements and would therefore reduce the need for additional shelters or overhead structures. Further, the lot is surrounded by an existing planting area currently filled with minimal low growing plant materials. There is space in these areas to provide more plantings to enhance the aesthetics of the site. Low growing plants are preferred by the Gold Country Stage staff, as it allows for bus clearance and safety. Because the site is constrained by the overhead freeway structure, only low growing plants would be feasible.

- The Park-and-Ride is adjacent to properties zoned Town Core (TC) and Neighborhood Center Flex (NC-Flex) and designated as Commercial in the 2020 General Plan. Both of the zoning designations and the land use category promote the development of more intense uses, such as commercial, multi-family and mixed-use projects.

- The Park-and-Ride is owned and maintained by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). Typically, Caltrans grants public agencies permission to utilize and develop a site when the use is transportation related. The cost associated with this is very low, if one exists at all, and would be required for liability purposes. Plans would have to be reviewed and approved by Caltrans.

Constraints

- The Park-and-Ride lot is an oddly configured space, with large posts extending along the entire length of the property that support the highway overhead. It would be extremely expensive to relocate these support posts. The size of the property does not appear to be large enough to accommodate a transit center, based on the

non-uniform property dimensions. The narrowest portion of the property (at the south end along South Auburn Street) appears to be slightly less than 100 feet, the amount of space needed for a bus to turn around. From a site design perspective, these dimensions, the support posts and odd shape of the property appear to eliminate the feasibility of a transit center at this site.

- Approximately 5 bus routes would need to be significantly reconfigured, as these routes do not pass by the Park-and-Ride site (see the Appendix). Access to the site is very difficult, which presents issues with potential revisions to the routes. Based on the current driveway locations, buses would need to enter the Park-and-Ride from the triangle area where Colfax Avenue, South Auburn Street and Neal Street converge. Due to the existing traffic conditions at this intersection, pulling buses in this driveway would cause significant impacts to both the traffic and the bus routes. With this option, in addition to the 5 route reconfigurations, the travel direction for Route 3 would need to be reversed in order to operate more efficiently.

- The intersection directly adjacent to the Park-and-Ride lot, comprised of Neal Street/Colfax Avenue, South Auburn Street and the frontage road for the freeway (Tinloy Street), experiences the highest rate of accidents in the City of Grass Valley[1]. The cause of the accidents can be attributed to the triangle alignment of the streets and poorly regulated intersections due to the signal timing.

- The Park-and-Ride lot consists of 52 spaces, including 2 handicapped spaces. During a site visit, 60 percent of the parking spaces (31 spaces) were occupied. Locating a transit center at this site would eliminate parking with substantial existing utilization. Replacement parking would need to be provided elsewhere.

- While there are some positive aspects to locating the site underneath the freeway structure, there are safety concerns as well. There is little natural light that accesses this area during the daytime, and significant amounts of strategically placed lighting features would be necessary for the evening and night hours. The noise and shadows created by the freeway makes this an unattractive place for passengers to wait.

Potential Site Plan

The close spacing of roadways and intersection, one-way streets, and presence of freeway structure supports all make this a difficult site to design an effective transit center. As shown in Figure 6, the most feasible layout that avoids moving columns is to provide two one-way aisles for transit bays, running from two driveways on South Auburn Street to the northeast, with a single exiting driveway onto Hansen Street. The transit building would be along the Colfax Highway frontage. Passengers would need to cross transit lanes to get to the bus bays, and the limited space means that bus

[1] Grass Valley's Master Streets Plan

FIGURE 6

CONCEPTUAL TRANSIT CENTER SITE PLAN - PARK-AND-RIDE SITE

movements in and out of the various bays would conflict. In addition, it could be necessary under this plan to place an advance signal head for northbound traffic on South Auburn Street just south of the freeway, in order to provide gaps in this northbound queue to allow southbound buses to enter the site.

Tinloy Street Right of Way

Tinloy Street is the southbound frontage road along the west side of SR 49/20. The area of interest for the project site is the block of Tinloy Street located between East Bennett Street and Bank Street. The street consists of two through travel lanes, both running in the southbound direction, and on-street parking to the right. There is approximately 18 feet to 31 feet, depending on the location along Tinloy Street, between the edge of curb and Wolf Creek, with a slight slope downward. The site is located adjacent to the Town Core (TC) zoning designation.

Opportunities

- This section of the downtown Golden Center Freeway frontage road system is relatively wide, with a total of approximately 175 feet between the edge of pavement of the southbound Golden Center Freeway shoulder and the eastern property line. Much of this distance consists of the embankment supporting the freeway and the Wolf Creek corridor, leaving approximately 80 feet of distance between the toe of the embankment and the existing fence along the east side of Wolf Creek. This width at the base of the slope widens to roughly 105 feet just north of Bank Street.

- Currently, Routes 1, 8, 5, 5X, 10 and 12 already travel along this section of Tinloy Street. The remaining Routes, 2, 3, 4, 6 and 11 would need to be rerouted to this location. Table 7 shows the overall impact on the route should the transfer center be relocated to this site. While Routes 2 and 11 would have an overall increase of approximately 8 minutes, Routes 6 and 8 an overall increase of 5 minutes, and Route 3 an overall increase of approximately 2 minutes, the remaining routes would actually experience reduced travel times. Overall reduced travel times could be applied to other routes as well, based upon options present for reconfigurations of the routes that would avoid the congestion in the downtown area. Attachment A shows the potential route configurations for this potential site.

- This site is located within walking distance to downtown (within a quarter-mile) and provides easy pedestrian and bicycle access via Bank Street, as well as proposed enhanced pedestrian ways connecting East Main Street, Stewart Street and Bank Street, as discussed in the Redevelopment Agency's Downtown Strategic Plan. Directly behind this site location, on the opposite side of Wolf Creek, is the Post Office, and City Hall is approximately one block to the west. With the new hotel located directly adjacent to the site at the corner of Bank Street and Tinloy Street, there is the potential to attract more visitors to the system.

- By utilizing a one-way street with two lanes and relocating the existing on-street parking to the left side of the street, impacts to traffic flow would be minimized. This configuration would allow buses ample room to turn off the street and through traffic would be able to pass freely. The lane widths are wide enough to accommodate the relocation of the parking, thereby not losing any needed on-street parking serving the post office and other nearby services. The existing crosswalk along East Bennett Street would provide a crossing path for pedestrians who have parked along the street.

- With a transit related use, Caltrans, who owns and maintains this site, typically permits public agencies to utilize a site subsequent to their review and approval of the plans. Fees and costs for this type of project are typically low, with the costs intending to cover any liability that may exist.

- The properties located along the creek abutting Tinloy Street are zoned Town Core (TC) and are designated Public (post office) and Commercial. The TC zone is intended to promote mixed-use and pedestrian-oriented developments that strengthen and enhance the downtown area. A transit center in this location would not only be consistent with mixed use and commercial development, but it would also enhance pedestrian access to and through the downtown area.

- As discussed below, this area is identified as an important element of the Wolf Creek Parkway project, including stream enhancement and a multipurpose pedestrian/ bicycle trail. Properly designed, a transit center could complement this trail by providing a multimodal transportation center and transit access to the parkway.

Constraints

- The existing 14 spaces along the right side of Tinloy Street are well used (particularly for the post office). Relocating them to the west side of the street would slightly increase walk distances.

- In April 2006, the Grass Valley City Council adopted the *Wolf Creek Parkway Alignment Study and Conceptual Master Plan*. This plan calls for rehabilitation of Wolf Creek and design of a non-motorized trail system along the corridor, with the intention to promote pedestrian and bicycle use, protect and rehabilitate the creek's habitat, provide new recreational opportunities, and attract visitors to the downtown core. The creek trail, approximately 2.2 miles in total length, includes the section of Tinloy Street between East Bennett Street and Bank Street, which is known as the "Downtown Reach" in the report. Plans for this reach suggest that the area is critical to the success of the trail system, as it will provide direct access to downtown. Specific features along Tinloy Street include a continuous pedestrian and bicycle promenade, shady urban plazas, footbridges connecting to the downtown civic building, and closer access to the creek. A transit center located along the Tinloy Street right of way would have to be carefully designed to accommodate or

complement the Parkway Plan. This could require shifting the Tinloy travel lanes to the east to provide space for both the bicycle/pedestrian facilities as well as the transit facilities.

- The plans for the trail system are subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and require environmental review, which is anticipated to be in the form of an EIR due to the scope of the project and the involvement of a waterway (Wolf Creek). Should federal funding or permitting be a part of this project, it will also be subject to the requirements of the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA). Agencies with jurisdiction in the project area other than the City of Grass Valley include Nevada County, Caltrans, the Nevada Irrigation District, the Nevada County Transportation Commission, the Army Corps of Engineers, the California Department of Fish and Game, and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service. Additionally, active interest in the project by private owners of parcels within the creek corridor is represented by the Wolf Creek Community Alliance, a local citizen group that monitors the water quality in the creek and promotes habitat restoration as part of the Wolf Creek project. If the transit center project is tied into the Wolf Creek Parkway project, it would be subject to the CEQA review as well. Further, if is determined that the two projects are combined or linked and federal funding is used for the transit center portion, the project may trigger NEPA requirements as well. If one or both environmental review processes are required, it will be a lengthy process due to the number of agencies and components involved, as well as the public review process, therefore delaying the development of the center.

Potential Site Plan

A conceptual plan for this site is shown in Figure 7. This plan maintains the existing stream area width for most of the length (roughly 38 feet), and accommodates a 10-foot-wide bike trail, with an additional five feet of separation from the transit uses (which could include a low wall to keep trail users and transit passengers separated). Bus bays are provided along the west side of Tinloy Street, with adequate space to allow 20 feet between buses (thereby reducing the conflict between buses in adjacent bays). A 10-foot sidewalk/loading area is provided. Near the south end of the street the space between the creek and roadway widens and the bus bay ends, providing an area (roughly 22 feet wide) for transit facility uses. This facility could also incorporate the existing utility station on-site.

The existing parking spaces eliminated for the bus bays would be replaced by new parking along the west side of the roadway, served by a 5-foot sidewalk. This plan would require shifting the existing Tinloy through lanes to the east by roughly five feet. Along with the auto parking lane and adjacent sidewalk, the existing 18-to-20-foot flat unpaved area between Tinloy and the foot of the freeway embankment would be effectively eliminated. A five-foot shift would probably require some minor realignment of Tinloy Street northeast of Bennett Street and south of Bank Street. Additional space could be provided on the west side of Tinloy (such as to expand space for the trail and

FIGURE 7

CONCEPTUAL TRANSIT CENTER SITE PLAN - TINLOY SITE

greenway alignment or the transit center), but this would require a retaining wall at the foot of the freeway embankment.

Hansen Street Right of Way

Hansen Street is a two-lane, one-way street running northbound along the east side of State Route 49/20, and serves as a frontage road for the highway. The section of interest is between Colfax Avenue/Highway 174 and Bank Street. As with Tinloy Street, there are two travel lanes; however, there is no on-street parking. There is approximately 52 feet of distance between the toe of the Golden Center Freeway embankment and the eastern property line, of which roughly 16 feet is currently landscaping area between the eastern edge of Hansen Street pavement and the property line. This site is bordered on the right by both NC-Flex (Neighborhood Center Flex) and NG-3 (Neighborhood General 3) zoning designations.

Opportunities

- Traffic impacts created by buses coming and going from the transfer center would be minimized by utilizing the landscaped area to the right of the paved road, as well as a portion of the travel lanes. By taking advantage of a street with two lanes running in one direction, buses would have adequate room to pull in and out while allowing passing traffic to move freely. The existing crosswalk located at the corner of Hansen Way and Colfax Avenue would provide pedestrian access towards the downtown. Additionally, the crosswalk at the north end of the block at Bank Street would provide alternate access to downtown and the post office area. Parking for riders who drive to the transit center could utilize the Park-and-Ride lot, located across Colfax Avenue. This parking area may provide the employee parking as well.

- The site is located within a quarter-mile of the downtown and within close proximity to many services, including Sierra Nevada Children's Services, Hennessey School, and Safeway. The Colfax Avenue corridor, which has been identified to present redevelopment opportunities, is directly adjacent and within walking distance to this location as well.

- Subsequent to review and approval of any development plans, Caltrans permits public agency use of rights of way for transit related projects. Costs are usually very low as no formal lease or purchase of the property is necessary and usually only covers liability costs.

Constraints

- The site is located directly adjacent to a large area zoned for residential (single family and multi-family) uses, and other low-intensity uses such as day cares, bed and breakfast inns and parks. The land use designation in the General Plan 2020 is Urban High Density, which promotes mixed use and easy access to alternate

transportation modes. While the land designations potentially support such a use, the area along the roadway is developed with single-family residences. Further, the NG-3 (Neighborhood General-3) district would allow for the continuation and future development of single-family residences, which may not be considered compatible with a transit center, due to potential noise and air quality issues. Currently, the potential site directly abuts single-family residential uses along much of the stretch of Hansen Way, with the exception of a day spa at the corner of Colfax Avenue and a multi-family residential complex at the corner of Bank Street.

- With the existing schedule and routes, only 1 bus route runs by this area. Route 3, in its current configuration, runs along Colfax Avenue and could easily be rerouted to turn up the street. The remaining 10 bus routes would need to be rerouted to service this area (see the Appendix). Table 7 illustrates the impacts to the running times of the routes with this location. Routes 1, 4, 5 and 10/12 would experience significant improvements or reduced running times, while the remaining routes, Route 3, Routes 2/11 and Routes 6/8, would experience increases. However, alternate major route reconfiguration opportunities are present that would reduce or minimize the impacts to the routes.

Potential Site Plan

A potential transit center layout on this site, which stays within existing right-of-way, is shown in Figure 8. As with the Tinloy plan, it would consist of a single lane of bus bays along the side of the frontage road, with the transit building at the south end. This site plan allows the western edge of Hansen Avenue pavement to remain in its current location. Just north of Colfax Avenue, a 3-foot shoulder and two 11-foot northbound travel lanes would be provided, along with a 10-foot sidewalk and 20 feet of right-of-way width available for the building. Further north, where the distance from the western edge of pavement to the eastern property line narrows to roughly 48 feet, there is still sufficient width to provide a 12-foot transit bay lane, a 10-foot sidewalk, two 11-foot travel lanes and a 3-foot shoulder, as shown in the cross-section.

Another option for this site would be to purchase additional land on the east side of the right-of-way. For instance there is a triangular portion of a parcel just south of the Depot Street alignment that is currently vacant, with dimension of approximately 100 feet by 120 feet. Placing the transit building on this parcel would substantially increase the amount of outside pedestrian waiting area and landscaping that could be provided, and also put the building in a more central location to the bus bays.

Finally, it may be possible to use the westernmost portion of the Depot Street alignment to provide a modest amount of additional space to enhance the passenger amenities. For instance, even 10 feet of space beyond the Caltrans right-of-way could provide space for an enhanced bus shelter that would better serve passengers waiting for the buses using the northernmost bus bays.

FIGURE 8

CONCEPTUAL TRANSIT CENTER SITE PLAN - HANSEN SITE

Safeway Parking Lot

The Safeway parking lot consists of two parcels, one larger parcel on which Safeway and the majority of the parking is located, and a smaller parcel at the edge along Neal Street that accommodates a smaller portion of the parking. This smaller parcel is the area of the parking lot that could be considered for the transit center. Access to the site is off Neal Street through an existing driveway. No other entry or exit points are located near this area. The overall site is located where Neal Street, South Auburn Street and Colfax Avenue meet. The site is designated TC (Town Core) under the City's Development Code.

Opportunities

- The Master Street System Plan designates the South Auburn Street/Neal Street/Colfax Avenue area as the ideal location for a transit center, without identifying a specific location. Based on the information provided in this document, the Safeway site would be a preferred location. Further, the Redevelopment Agency's *Downtown Strategic Plan* identifies the South Auburn Street corridor as the ideal location for a transit facility, though this document specifically states the parking lot across the street ("Pioneer Village") as the ideal location for a transit center/parking structure combination.

- The *Wolf Creek Parkway Alignment Study* states that the Safeway parking lot is currently *". . . under-landscaped and entirely devoid of shade"* and that *"much needed improvement to this unattractive and unpleasant area could be instigated by, and coordinated with, plans for the Wolf Creek Parkway."* Because aesthetics are an important factor in the transit center at this location, a joint effort could be made to combine the visual and alternative transportation goals of the Wolf Creek study with the goals and design of the transit center.

- This site is located approximately one block from the heart of downtown, as well as the Library, various public schools, Chamber of Commerce and other services. It also provides easy access to the highway, which has on- and off-ramps just to the east. The site is also located across the street from the Park-and-Ride lot that could provide parking for both riders and GCS employees.

- The ability to develop a functional transit center with indoor waiting areas, bike lockers, restrooms and other amenities would be feasible at this location due to the "empty" nature of the site. Because it is a paved area with no structures, no obstacles are present to design around. Safety would also be maintained, as the site is highly visible, currently includes substantial lighting in the parking lot and the Safeway is open during late hours.

- Safeway and the surrounding properties are zoned Town Core (TC) and have commercial land use designations. As discussed previously, both the zoning district

and land use is conducive to mixed-use, commercial or high density residential developments, including a transit hub. This type of development is consistent with the density and intensity of use allowed in this area and would make alternative modes of transportation accessible to both the users and residents, thereby achieving both the goals of the zoning district and General Plan.

Constraints

- Of greatest concern with this site is that of the existing traffic conditions at the South Auburn Street, Colfax Avenue and Neal Street intersections. The City's Master Street System Plan states that not only does this area have traffic operational challenges, but it experiences the greatest number of accidents in the City. Due to the traffic conditions at this intersection, buses pulling out of the transit center could feasibly only make right turns, requiring major route adjustments. Bus movements would also frequently be delayed by traffic queues from the signals.

- This parcel is currently used for roughly 60 parking spaces. Informal observation indicate that this parking is not heavily utilized (typically 5 to 10 vehicles parked on site), but there are undoubtedly peak shopping times when this parking area is more heavily used. The effective parking lost to use of this site as a transit center would need to be mitigated, perhaps through spaces provided as part of a new nearby public parking structure.

- Because the parcel is owned by a private party, acquisition of the site may be difficult. The owner may not wish to sell the property, and if they do, the asking price may be an issue.

- While many of the current routes make trips past Safeway down Neal Street, the location of the site within the block presents problems with the routes and the feasibility of a transit center. The routes run westbound down Neal Street to approach the existing transit facility. In order to enter the site without crossing traffic, these routes would need to be reconfigured to run the opposite direction. This would force the buses to reverse the "loop" currently run around the downtown via Tinloy Street, Neal Street, Church Street and Main Street to a counterclockwise direction. Subsequently, 6 routes would experience increases in overall travel time, and the direction of Route 3 would need to be reversed. Only Routes 5/5x and 10/12 would have minor decreases in travel time. Detailed information regarding the impacts to each route can be found in Table 7, and route configurations can be found in the Appendix. No existing bus stops are located along these roads in this "counter-clockwise" direction, and due to the conditions of the roadways, there are no opportunities to incorporate new stops that would allow the buses to operate without impacts on traffic.

Potential Site Plan

This site is very constrained by the size of the parcel, and the limitations on site access due to the traffic queues generated by the South Auburn/Neal Street Signal. As shown in Figure 9, the most effective site plan for this site would provide two bus bays along the south side of Neal Street just west of South Auburn Street, and then provide three pairs of bus bays in three aisles on the site, with two passenger islands separating these interior aisles. The transit building would be located in the southwest corner of the site. Due to the limited size of the parcel, no space would be provided for maneuvering around buses, and the space available for passenger amenities would be very limited. The presence of traffic queues would require all buses to enter from Neal Street southeastbound, and exit onto South Auburn Street southbound.

Pioneer Village

Pioneer Village is a shopping center and parking lot located at the corner where South Auburn Street, Neal Street, and Colfax Avenue converge, and is directly across Neal Street from Safeway. The site can be accessed from two driveways off South Auburn Street and Neal Street. According to the new Development Code, the site and the surrounding properties are zoned as TC (Town Core) and have a Commercial land use designation in the General Plan.

Opportunities

- Both the Redevelopment Agency's *Downtown Strategic Plan* and the City's *Master Street System Plan* identify this area as the ideal location for a transit center. This specific site is called out in the *Street System Plan* as a proposed parking structure with a transit center below. Consistent with the *Downtown Strategic Plan*, the *Wolf Creek Parkway Alignment Study* also discusses the need to visually improve this area and promote new modes of transportation. A transit center at this location would be able to incorporate pedestrian and bicycle routes from the transit center, as well as visually appealing landscaping treatments that will enhance the area and create the "gateway" into downtown that is desired.

- Pioneer Village consists of two sections: a privately-owned shopping center and associated parking spaces, and a City-owned parking lot with parking by permit-only during business hours. In terms of feasibility of the transit center, the section immediately adjacent to the intersection of South Auburn Street and Neal Street would ideal, due to size and location. This area is the City owned parking lot, and subsequently would not present any acquisition issues.

- Approximately 6 of the routes (Routes 1, 3, 5, 5X, 10 and 12) currently pass Pioneer Village, and due to this site's close proximity to the existing transfer station (2 blocks), the remaining routes would not require substantial changes. In fact, as shown in Table 7, only Routes 2/11 would experience a change in their travel time, with an overall increase of 4 minutes. The remaining routes would either improve

FIGURE 9

CONCEPTUAL TRANSIT CENTER SITE PLAN - SAFEWAY SITE

their running times or see no changes. With this location, it is possible to substantially reconfigure some of the routes (to avoid the traffic delays along Church Street and West Main Street) which could result in reduced overall running times. Please refer to the Appendix for the potential route configurations for this site.

- Pioneer Village is located only one block from Mill Street, the core of the historic downtown. Congestion in the downtown would be minimized at this location, as routes could be reconfigured to travel up South Auburn Street rather than Church Street. Important services are located within easy walking distance to this location, including the City Library, Safeway, Chamber of Commerce and local schools. Parking for both the riders and employees could not only be located in the potential parking structure, but also the Park-and-Ride lot down the street.

- The Town Core (TC) zoning district and the Commercial land use designation both strive to promote alternative transportation methods for users, as well as mixed-use developments. A transit center in this area would be consistent with the intent and goals of the zoning and land use designations, and would provide unique opportunities for mixed-use development. Further, because a parking lot is a permitted use in this district, a transit center as part of a parking structure would be consistent with the zoning district as well as the Downtown Strategic Plan, which proposes such a development for this site.

Constraints

- The existing traffic conditions at this site are considered to be the worst in the City, with the intersection operating at an LOS E. The angles at which South Auburn Street, Neal Street, Colfax Avenue, and Tinloy Street converge, in addition to the traffic signals, create increased traffic congestion and accident rates. A transit center located at this corner could potentially increase any congestion and deficient traffic conditions. Access into and out of the site would also be impacted by traffic queues, particularly southbound on South Auburn Street.

- It should be noted that provision of a transit center on this site would not open up the opportunity to fund all of a joint transit center/parking structure with federal funding. Federal programs generally limit federal funding participation to the costs associated with that portion of the structure either directly used by the transit function, or those spaces required to mitigate a loss of existing parking generated by the facility. Therefore, while a portion of a joint structure could potentially be funded in part by federal transit programs, other sources would need to be pursued for the bulk of the construction costs.

Potential Site Plan

A potential site plan for this site was developed assuming that the transit uses would be part of a larger program (such as a public parking structure). As indicated in Figure 10, both the South Auburn and Neal frontages would be widened to provide four bus bays

FIGURE 10

CONCEPTUAL TRANSIT CENTER SITE PLAN - PIONEER VILLAGE SITE

along each street. A single access point into other onsite parking is provided along each street. Again, the nose-to-tail bus bay configuration would be needed to accommodate the eight bus bays on this site. The building floor area would be located in the corner (where transit staff and passengers could see all bays). To allow egress from the bays along South Auburn Street, transit staff could trigger an extension of the southbound green indication at the South Auburn/Neal signal to clear the southbound queue.

Donely Motors

Donely Motors, a used car dealership, is located adjacent to a bowling alley (Prosperity Lanes) and large parking lot at the southwest corner of Colfax Avenue and Henderson Street. The site consists of a central building on the lot, serving as a repair space and office, surrounded by parking. Access is from driveways off Colfax Avenue or Henderson Street.

While this is the preferred site in this location, the parking for the bowling alley next door provides a substantial amount of space that could be utilized as well. The primary zoning designation along this stretch of Colfax Avenue is NC-Flex (Neighborhood Center Flex), including all properties along the street from Highway 49/20 east to Ophir Street, and the properties on the west side of Henderson Street south to Race Street.

Opportunities

- Donely Motors is located on a corner, providing easy ingress and egress for the buses. This would locate the center completely off the street, allowing for through traffic to move freely and without requiring the buses to drive "loops" in order to begin or end their routes in the correct direction.

- The existing location is located on Highway 174; however, due to the low intensity uses in the general area and other means of entering Grass Valley (i.e., Highway 20/49), traffic is fairly light and does not experience significant congestion throughout the day. An exception may be during peak PM hours, where a queue of 17 cars was observed along Colfax Avenue from the stop sign at Colfax Avenue and Hansen Avenue. Stop signs are the only means of traffic control when heading westbound until the light located at Colfax Avenue and South Auburn Street. It is not anticipated that the existing traffic patterns would be substantially impacted by an off-street transit center at this location.

- This corridor along Colfax Avenue from Hansen Street eastbound to Ophir Street is viewed by the City as an ideal area for redevelopment. This is evidenced by the new zoning designation along this section to the new NC-Flex, or Neighborhood Center Flex, which allows for a variety of uses that are primarily determined by market and changing neighborhood conditions. Currently, the frontage along Colfax Avenue includes a school, a bed-and-breakfast, day spa, barber, bowling alley, few small markets/delis and a new restaurant. The potential for more intense uses, such as additional restaurants or other retail establishments, is present with this new zoning

and would be compatible and complementary uses with a transit center. The General Plan 2020 also designates this area as Commercial, and has included Urban High Density land uses nearby, both of which would be considered compatible with a transit center.

Constraints

- The only route that serves Colfax Avenue and this area of Grass Valley is Route 3. Therefore, all additional 10 routes would need to be revised in order to serve this location (see the Appendix). As shown in Table 7, should the transit center be located at Donely Motors, 4 routes would experience significant delays in their overall routes. Specifically, Routes 2/11 and Routes 6/8 would see an increase in their run time of approximately eight minutes. Route 5/5x would be the only route that would have a reduction in the running time, by approximately five minutes. The remaining routes would not have any changes, as the routes would avoid the congestion downtown.

- Donely Motors is located on a privately owned parcel of land. As discussed with the Safeway site, this presents site acquisition issues, as the owner may not wish to sell or the asking price would be more than the budget could allow.

- Based upon the results of both the public survey and kick-off meeting survey, locating the transit center in downtown or within walking distance to downtown was a key point. The Donely Motors site is located approximately 0.40 miles from the center of downtown (Mill Street and Bank Street), which is not considered an ideal distance to promote pedestrian movement into the downtown area, especially for elderly or physically disabled riders. Additionally, with this location on the east side of the elevated highway, it has the potential to be perceived as a physical and visual barrier, further discouraging pedestrian and bicyclist activity from the transit center to the downtown.

- The site is located near existing residential land uses. The substantial increase in transit vehicle traffic in the area could be seen as a detriment to residents of the area.

- The site is in a less visible part of the community, providing a lesser "presence" for the transit program than the other sites.

Potential Site Plan

Developing a potential site plan for this site that achieves the desired program revealed that the program cannot be accommodated solely on the Donely Motors site. The example site plan, developed assuming that the southern boundary of the property is a constraint, requires approximately 70 feet of the bowling center parking lot to the west of the Donely Motors parcel in order to accommodate eight bus bays, assuming a

sawtooth bay configuration (allowing all buses to arrive and depart independently), as shown in Figure 11. This would eliminate approximately 30 existing parking spaces on the Bowling Center lot. Even with a straight bus bay configuration, roughly 50 feet of additional land would be required to the west.

City Hall Parking Lot

Located along West Main Street between Stewart Street and South Auburn Street is the City of Grass Valley City Hall. There are two parking lots that are associated with City Hall, one with access from South Auburn Street and West Main Street and the other with access from Stewart Street. Due to grade separation between South Auburn Street and Stewart Street, these two parking lots are not connected. This area is zoned TC, Town Core and is designated as Public in the General Plan.

Opportunities

- The site is located along West Main Street in the historic downtown one block from Mill Street, providing easy pedestrian and bicycle access to the downtown. Additional popular services within close proximity include the Post Office, Library, several senior centers, and the Center for the Arts. This location could serve as a central community hub, with the transit center providing access to civic activities at City Hall, as well as the Police Station directly adjacent.

- Because this parking lot is owned by the City of Grass Valley, there would not be any issues with respect to site acquisition.

- Based on current routes and schedules, six of the routes pass City Hall. Specifically, Routes 1, 4, 8, 5 and 5x travel down West Main Street and Route 12 travels down South Auburn Street. Because the existing transfer point is only located two blocks from this location, the remaining routes would not experience significant delays in the overall running times. In fact, due to potential reconfigurations of routes traveling to and from the west end of town, there would be a decrease in overall running times as the congestion along West Main Street from South Auburn Street towards the west could be avoided with selected route reconfigurations. Only Routes 2/11 and 6/8 would have slight increases in their running times. Table 7 shows the effects of this site on the routes, and the Appendix illustrates potential route configurations.

- This site has been determined by the City to be a preferred location, along with Pioneer Village, for a parking structure to accommodate the downtown parking demand. Preliminary plans have focused on a multi-level parking structure linking the two city lots along South Auburn Street/West Main Street and Stewart Street. Either location would provide adequate room for a transit center on the surface level with additional parking above. In particular, converting the existing surface lot along South Auburn Street would be ideal due to the existing driveways off South Auburn Street and Main Street that would provide safe and easy ingress and egress for the buses.

FIGURE 11

CONCEPTUAL TRANSIT CENTER SITE PLAN - DONELY MOTORS SITE

- The land use designation of Public refers to areas with public sector ownership or control and is used for providing facilities and services to meet public needs. Public ownership can be both governmental (i.e., City or County owned) or quasi-governmental (i.e., Gold Country Stage), and include uses such as public-sector facilities and community centers. The Town Center (TC) zoning district intends to promote pedestrian activity in the downtown and a mix of services appropriate to enhance the downtown area. The incorporation of a transit center in the downtown at this location would satisfy the intents of both the land use designation and the zoning district.

- Safety was noted as being an important factor in the design and site location for the transit center. The parking lot at City Hall is located directly adjacent to the main Police Station, ensuring safety at the site. Additionally, the site is located in an area with good visibility and activity during day and evening hours.

Constraints

- It has not formally been determined by the City that a parking structure will be constructed at this location, since there are two potential sites being considered. Should the City decide not to proceed with a parking structure at this location, it is not likely that a transit center would be feasible at this location due to the fact that all of the parking spaces at the surface lot on the corner of South Auburn Street and West Main Street would be removed and could not be replaced.

- Provision of a transit center meeting the desired number of bus bays would significantly reduce the parking capacity of the structure or require additional building height or the costs associated with additional underground parking.

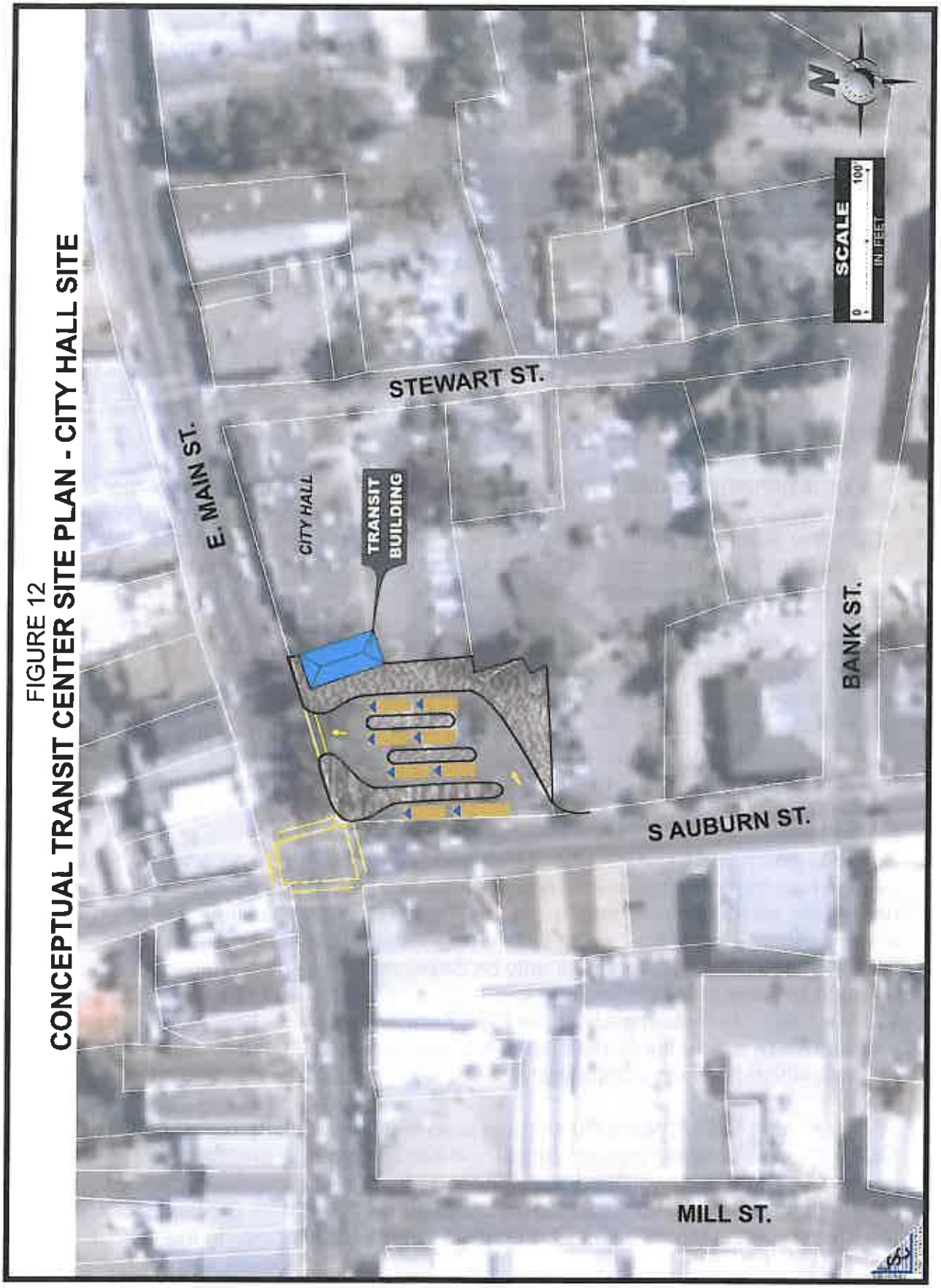
- It should be noted that provision of a transit center on this site would not open up the opportunity to fund all of a joint transit center/parking structure with federal funding. Federal programs generally limit federal funding participation to the costs associated with that portion of the structure either directly used by the transit function, or those spaces required to mitigate a loss of existing parking generated by the facility. Therefore, while a portion of a joint structure could potentially be funded in part by federal transit programs, other sources would need to be pursued for the bulk of the construction costs.

Potential Site Plan

The possible layout of a transit center on this site is constrained by the narrow 18-20 foot width of Stewart Street (which is too narrow to serve transit buses), and the limited dimensions of the potential land area, particularly just to the south of City Hall. In evaluating various alternatives, the most feasible option would be to provide a series of two-bus bus bays in a north-south orientation, with an entrance from South Auburn Street and an exit onto East Main Street. As shown in Figure 12, this would effectively use the area currently used for the parking lot to the west of City Hall. A transit building

FIGURE 12

CONCEPTUAL TRANSIT CENTER SITE PLAN - CITY HALL SITE



could be provided as a stand-alone structure between the transit bays and the City Hall building, or it could be built into the side of a parking structure to the south of City Hall.

Buses could approach the center either northbound on South Auburn Street (to access all bus bays) or southbound on South Auburn Street from Main Street (to access the eastern four bus bays only). Buses departing the two bays on the east curb of South Auburn Street could turn either left or right onto Main Street, but the buses departing the off-street bays would probably be limited to right turns onto eastbound Main Street only. This site plan would preclude general public access into a parking structure from South Auburn Street, but emergency/public safety vehicle access could be provided.

OTHER SITES REVIEWED, BUT NOT CONSIDERED IN DETAIL

In addition to the seven sites discussed above, several other sites were reviewed but dropped from detailed consideration:

- The large property located along East Bennett Street, beginning at the corner of Kidder Avenue and extending northwest towards Highway 49/20, is an old rail yard site for the Nevada County Narrow Gauge Railroad, now privately owned. While this site would provide more than adequate space for a full service transit facility, there are several constraints associated with the site.

- First and foremost, the steep slope in the northwest direction of East Bennett Street would provide ADA accessibility issues. The overall site is stabilized and leveled by a large retaining wall, increasing in height as the slope descends. Not only does the slope of the street itself present accessibility issues, but removal of a significant portion of the site (retaining wall along the street and earth material) would be required to provide access from East Bennett Street through a new ramp and retaining wall.

- Second, the property is zoned Neighborhood General 3, which permits residential uses (single family and multi-family) and other low intensity uses such as bed and breakfasts, parks and playgrounds. However, the General Plan land use designation is Commercial. Due to the lack of internal consistency between these two documents, a transit center could only be developed if a zoning ordinance amendment was granted to rezone to a more compatible land use, such as Commercial or Neighborhood Center Flex. Further, the property appears to be surrounded by single family residential and low density multi-family uses (i.e. duplex), which presents compatibility issues such as traffic, noise and air quality.

- The Hennessy School North Parking Lot is an existing lot along the south side of Colfax Avenue between Hansen Street and Kidder Street. A preliminary review indicated that this site would be too small to accommodate the desired transit program, the loss of school parking and drop-off area would be problematic, and that the Transit Center would be an incompatible lands use this close to the school.

COMPARISON OF SITES

Table 6 presents a comparison of the strengths and weaknesses of the various sites, as well as a simple ranking of the sites. A scale of 1 to 4 was assigned for each factor and site, with a score of 4 for excellent, 3 for good, 2 for fair, and 1 for poor. These ranking represent the Consultant's opinion based upon this analysis. As shown, the highest overall score of 41 was found for the Tinloy Site, followed closely by City Hall with a score of 40. The Hansen Way and Donely Motors sites all scored between 37, while the remainder of the site scored between 30 and 34, with the Safeway site receiving the lowest score of 30.

It should be noted that the results of this ranking depend upon the specific factors considered. In addition, this simple addition of the various rankings for each factor inherently weights each factor equally – assigning differing "weights" to the various factors would also result in differing overall scoring.

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